

# CITY PLANNING BOARD — TORONTO

(Established June 1st, 1941, by By-Law No. 15761)

## MEMBERS

Term Expires

A. G. PARTRIDGE (Chairman),	
President, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. Ltd.....	December 31, 1943
E. R. ARTHUR,	
Prof. of Arch. Design, University of Toronto.....	" 31, 1944
W. C. McBRIEN,	
Chairman, Toronto Transportation Commission.....	" 31, 1944
*C. J. WOOLSEY,	
Toronto and District Labour Council.....	" 31, 1944
F. D. TOLCHARD,	
General Manager, Toronto Board of Trade.....	" 31, 1944
D. M. FLEMING,	
Alderman, Toronto City Council.....	" 31, 1943
TRACY D. leMAY,	
Commissioner of City Planning.....	

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

J. D. MILLER,  
Deputy Minister, Department of Highways

A. J. B. GRAY,  
Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs.

\*Appointed September, 1943, in lieu of Wm. Dunn (resigned).

(J. P. Maher resigned January, 1943, and no new appointment has been made).

MARTIN BALDWIN  
Executive Secretary

## ADVISORY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (appointed by the Board)

A. E. K. BUNNELL, Consulting Engineer (Convener)

A. S. MATHERS, Architect

S. R. FROST, Consulting Engineer

H. B. DUNINGTON-GRUBB, Landscape Architect

E. G. FALUDI, City Planning Consultant

# THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO

*A Brief Explanation of the First Stage of the Master Plan for the City of Toronto and Its Suburbs. Submitted to the City Council, December 31st, 1943 by the City Planning Board.*

## THE PURPOSE

In the certain knowledge that Canada will continue to grow and prosper, and that Toronto will hold her place in the ranks of Canadian cities, the City Planning Board has prepared the Master Plan for the future growth and development of the City.

In this Plan the Board has provided for those amenities and conveniences, and has projected areas for work and living, which, in its opinion, will be required by all of the citizens in the future. Many specific undertakings are proposed and recommendations made, which are designed to meet the City's future requirements. Of these many will be found to fit in with a Post War Construction Programme for public and private works.

In developing the Master Plan, the Board has considered carefully the growth of population, commerce and industry and the increase in area resulting directly from and essential to that growth, as well as many other influences which bear upon the problem. It has considered the changing modes of life of the people, the advancements in science, art and technology, and the most recent developments in vehicular and aerial transportation. Since none of these are static, the Master Plan has been conceived as a flexible instrument, designed to control and direct natural growth and development rather than to restrict or to prevent it.

At the outset, the Board perceived that the political boundaries of the City bear no relation to the social and economic life of its people. Since in a planning sense political boundaries have no significance, the Master Plan, of necessity, applies to and encompasses the whole of the future built-up area, of which Toronto is the centre and the most important part.

It was also apparent that since the City is for practical purposes built up, future growth must largely be accommodated in the vacant lands of adjacent suburbs, although any large increase in the population of the whole area must also result in an incidental but more intensive development within the boundaries of the City itself. The

Master Plan is therefore an attempt to co-ordinate the physical development of the Metropolitan Area as one geographic, economic and social unit. The Plan, however, goes beyond the structural phases of land use, and the Board has had to give consideration to such matters as legislation, zoning, living conditions and all things affecting the welfare of the people.

The Master Plan, as now presented, embodies principles only, and does not portray the precise locations of the various features shown thereon. These can only be determined by an exhaustive technical study when sufficient funds and personnel are made available.

### BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In order to keep the general scope of the plan within reasonable and practicable bounds it has been predicated on the following basic assumptions:

1. The Period during which the plan is intended to govern development. The City Planning Board has selected 30 years. It was felt that a longer period might lead to visionary impracticability, a shorter period to a well-founded accusation of lack of foresight.
2. The estimated Population at the end of the period and the factors affecting population are:
  - (a) Natural increase.
  - (b) Immigration from overseas.
  - (c) The movement from rural to urban areas and vice versa.
  - (d) Economic conditions affecting these three factors.

After the most careful consideration possible under the circumstances the Board estimates that the population of the metropolitan area in the year 1974 will be between 1,250,000 and 1,500,000 or a maximum increase of 600,000 over the present population of 900,000.

3. Area to be planned. Assuming that a certain proportion of the new population will be accommodated in the City itself and that a suitable density for the suburban area allowing for adequate work and recreational locations will be 10,000 persons per acre, the Board

has determined that the area to be planned should be 100 square miles or 45 square miles more than the present built-up area.

On this basis the outer boundary has been fixed following roads and farm lot lines roughly on a semi-circle about 9 miles from Queen and Yonge Streets.

The foundations of the plan being thus determined, the Board proceeded to a detailed examination of the physical and social characteristics of the area and amassed a vast amount of factual data which was recorded on upwards of a hundred plans, etc., for study purposes.

From these facts groups of conclusions were reached which have formed the background for the various recommendations comprised in the Master Plan.

## ZONING OR THE USE OF LAND

### *Conclusions*

(a) That a City-wide zoning by-law is urgently needed to stabilise conditions throughout the City, to prevent the unwarranted further intrusion of industry into residential areas and to eliminate the confusion now resulting from about 800 by-laws with thousands of amendments.

(b) That a rigid control of the bulk of buildings in the central business area is essential.

(c) That the further concentration of industry within the City itself for the purpose of tax revenue and employment would be unsound because, firstly, there is already sufficient industry established to provide work at the present peak of industrial employment and, secondly, if industry for the future metropolitan population be located only in the City, mass transportation facilities would have to be provided to bring all of the workers into the central area every day, thus creating a central traffic problem far greater than anything yet experienced.

(d) That therefore the Metropolitan Area should be zoned to provide for the establishment of neighbourhoods each providing all the essentials for satisfactory living, employment and recreation.

(e) That some control must be established beyond the boundaries of the Metropolitan Area to prevent outlying and straggling residential

development separated from the nearest settlement by hundreds of acres of farm land and lacking public utilities and means of employment.

The Board has carefully reviewed the draft zoning by-law submitted to it by the City Council and strongly recommends its early adoption subject to a few minor amendments which do not affect its principles.

As far as the Metropolitan Area is concerned, the Board, recognising that the City's zoning jurisdiction terminates at the City limit, urges immediate co-operation between all the municipalities concerned in the preparation and enactment of zoning by-laws that will conserve the objects of the Master Plan including the prevention of sporadic residential development beyond the limits of the Metropolitan Area as determined. For the latter purpose an "Agricultural Belt" several miles wide is proposed beyond and contiguous to the boundaries of the Metropolitan Area.

## RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC HOUSING

### Conclusions

1. Residential areas, generally, south of College Street have reached a point where age, obsolescence and actual physical dilapidation indicate that at no very distant date widespread demolition will become most desirable if not essential.
2. That a process of haphazard rebuilding by private enterprise in an area with a horse-and-buggy street system and inadequate school and recreational facilities can never meet the modern conception of proper living conditions and can never be a permanent factor in arresting the processes of central decentralisation.
3. That planned reconstruction of considerable areas either as public housing or by private enterprise is necessary if the objects of the Master Plan are to be upheld.
4. That the type of redevelopment must bear an economic relationship to present values or in other words multiple family dwellings must be permitted to meet the competition of vacant land in the suburbs.

5. That the assembling, clearing and replanning of the site must be carried out by public agency aided financially by the Provincial and Federal Governments.

Speaking generally, the Board is convinced that good citizenship must be predicated on good housing and that to be successful the reconstruction of blighted areas must provide amenities that are equivalent to those which now supply the urge to abandon central residential areas and migrate to newly developed districts on the edge of the City next to the open country. The strength of a central rehousing programme lies in the community spirit that can be engendered and in the creation of living conditions that can at the least compete on equal terms with the best available elsewhere. New and modern neighbourhoods designed for modern urban life must be the objective of the whole reconstruction programme.

Only in this way can progressive decay be arrested and a reasonable return obtained for public services.

While the Board has indicated several areas on the Master Plan as being ripe for reconstruction, a detailed study has only been made of the area bounded by Parliament Street, Carlton Street and River Street. A tentative redevelopment plan has been prepared, particular attention being given to diversion of main traffic to the marginal thoroughfares and the closing of all unessential streets to permit a superblock development by private enterprise or for public housing.

The Board has selected the 41 acres of the central part of this area bounded by Parliament Street, Gerrard Street, Dundas Street and River Street as being suitable for public low rental housing. This area is at present occupied by 785 families, 640 of whom live in single family houses averaging from 60 to 70 years old. 676 families are tenants of whom 77% pay less than \$25 per month rent.

It is estimated on a two-storey superblock development of this site involving the closing of 19 minor streets, lanes and culs-de-sac that 20% more dwelling units can be provided with an actual decrease of 8.4% in land coverage. This will permit adequate open space for recreation and relaxation.

The Board recommends this area to the Toronto Housing Authority as a suitable site for public housing if such is to be undertaken.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

### Conclusions

- (a) That the existing street system provides too little actual pavement space, that many pavements could be widened with advantage and that the value of existing pavements of adequate width was largely lost because they were not connected and continued through the City.
- (b) That a mixture of street car and automobile traffic on the same street destroys highway efficiency and that every effort should be made to provide for the separation of these two types of traffic.
- (c) That intersections are the most important cause of traffic delays.
- (d) That parking on a standard 66-foot street-car street reduces its automobile carrying capacity by about 60%.
- (e) That because of the foregoing the existing street system was overloaded in 1939 to the extent of 30%.
- (f) That because of the existing lack of adequate facilities, the requirements of the estimated additional 600,000 population and the probable increased use of automobiles, additional facilities to the extent of 80% to 100%, should be provided.
- (g) That a gridiron street system providing innumerable routes of the same length between the business centre and most of the other parts of the City offers an invitation to traffic to wander through residential areas on streets designed for local traffic only, thereby greatly increasing the danger of injury to pedestrians (particularly children) and of collision with other vehicles.
- (h) That Provincial Highways should not be terminated abruptly at the City Limits forcing incoming traffic to reach its final destination by traversing a complicated network of narrow City pavements.

The Board realising the impracticability of attempting to correct these conditions on all the streets or even all the main streets of the City, decided to recommend, in addition to certain other important highway improvements, the construction of a framework of new depressed or elevated superhighways from which any part of the City would be reasonably accessible. It is proposed that these highways

shall be fully grade separated and connect directly with the existing provincial highway system and certain new provincial highways of the Queen Elizabeth Way type that are contemplated by the Highways Department as necessary for future construction.

The highways forming this framework are:

**SUPERHIGHWAY A**

Along the waterfront and supplying a missing link in the most important commercial highway in Canada running a distance of 600 miles from Montreal to Windsor. The Board is convinced that Toronto's future enhanced importance as a great distributional centre for the industrial products of the world, following the completion of the St. Lawrence Waterways Plan, demands a direct connection between Toronto Harbor and the main highway network of the Province.

**SUPERHIGHWAY B**

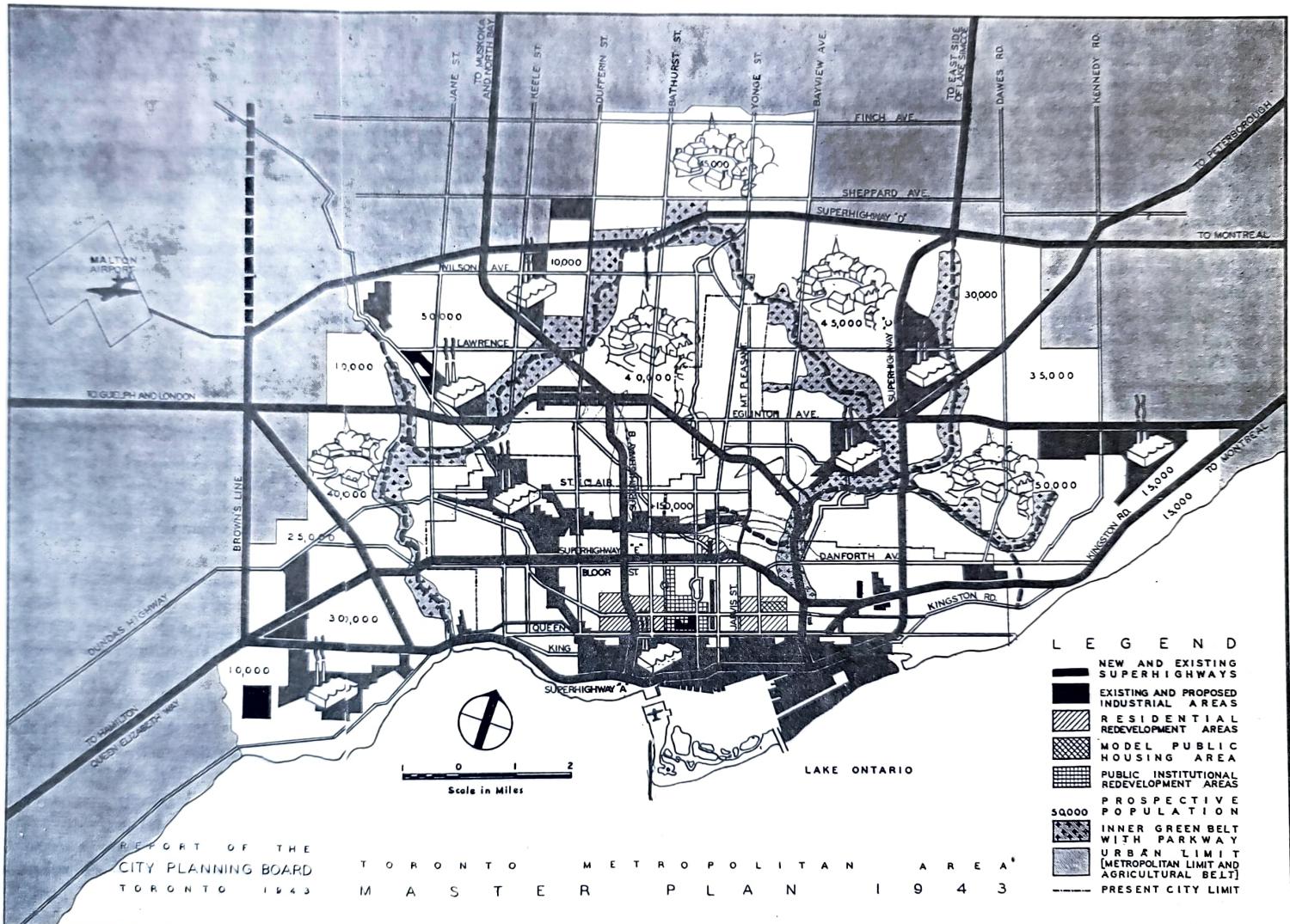
Takes advantage of the bed of the old Garrison Creek to provide a southerly continuation of a contemplated new express highway to Northern Ontario, located between Keele and Jane Streets. This highway will supplement Yonge Street and Brown's Line, which because they pass through many built-up urban areas are not readily adaptable to the requirements of high-speed through traffic. The connection with the waterfront highway will be in the vicinity of Princes' Gate on the westerly boundary of the City's principal industrial area.

**SUPERHIGHWAY C**

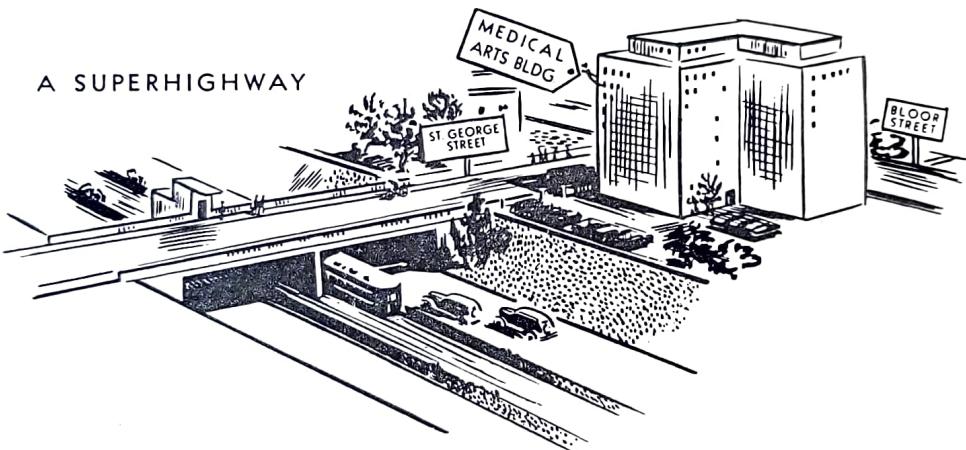
Runs northerly from the easterly terminus of the waterfront highway in the vicinity of Coxwell Avenue to a junction with Eglinton Avenue which is to be developed as a main route crossing both the Humber and the Don to connections with Brown's Line and the Kingston Road. It is not considered advisable to continue the waterfront road direct to the Kingston Road because of the effect on the Eastern Beach Area. Superhighway C will connect at Eglinton Avenue with a proposed new express route running north-easterly to Peterborough.

**SUPERHIGHWAY D**

Which is the main provincial highway bypass route, runs east and west just north of the present City Limits connecting the Kingston



Road in the vicinity of Highland Creek with Brown's Line near the Malton Air Port. Bypass traffic will use Brown's Line as a connection to the Queen Elizabeth Way passing through the easterly terminus of a contemplated new Provincial Highway to Guelph, Kitchener, Galt and Stratford.



#### SUPERHIGHWAY E

Is designed to form the backbone of East and West traffic through the heart of the City. It is close to and parallel to Bloor Street swinging south-easterly through the Rosedale Ravine and then approximately follows the line of Gerrard Street to the Kingston Road. Its westerly terminus is at the junction of Brown's Line with the proposed new road to Guelph. The main purposes of this highway, which will be depressed and fully grade separated, is to do away with the barrier to the free movement of north and south traffic now imposed by Bloor Street intersections right across the westerly part of the City and provide a high-speed connection between all north and south highways within the City.

#### RAPID TRANSIT

Because of the strong views held by the Board on the value of traffic segregation it gladly endorsed the proposals put forward in 1942 by the Toronto Transportation Commission for the construction of Rapid Transit Subways following Yonge Street from Heath Street to the Union Station and a cross town line following Queen Street from

**Gladstone Avenue to the Canadian National Railway Subway east of Broadview Avenue and thence following the Railway north-easterly to Pape Avenue. The Board also approves the subsequent proposals of the Commission to construct additional rapid transit lines on the Garrison Creek Superhighway from Queen Street to St. Clair Ave. and on the Bloor Street Superhighway from Dundas Street to University Avenue with a connection to the Union Station running southerly under the latter thoroughfare. The Board is convinced that the construction of the Yonge Street Subway, which will permit the removal of street cars from Yonge Street, Avenue Road and Sherbourne Street will do much to solve the City's most pressing transportation problem viz. north and south traffic through the heart of the City. The completion of the other proposed Rapid Transit lines will permit the removal of other street cars but in all cases, where conditions demand it, buses will be substituted for local traffic.**

#### **MAJOR HIGHWAYS AND ARTERIAL STREETS**

**Other important highway projects recommended by the Board are the extension of Jarvis Street to connect with Mount Pleasant Road, the construction of a high-speed route following the Old Belt Line Railway from the waterfront to a junction with the Garrison Creek Superhighway and the projection of Spadina Road by a tunnel under the Hill north of Davenport Road in order to give to this important thoroughfare the full north and south traffic value to which it is entitled but has never had, in spite of its strategic location and exceptional width between Bloor and Front Streets.**

**The Board is convinced that these three proposals with the Yonge Street Rapid Transit Subway will provide an effective solution to the central north and south traffic problem.**

**The widening of Queen Street between the Canadian National Railway Subway east of the Don and Gladstone Avenue is strongly recommended to provide an adequate distributional thoroughfare for the City's central industrial area and to provide an east and west counterpart to University Avenue that will give an air of distinction to the downtown area and counteract that general characteristic of meanness that is typical of Toronto's main downtown streets. As an**

ultimate proposal Queen Street is diverted to a new location west of Dufferin Street and projected through the southerly end of High Park to a new crossing of the Humber where it will connect with the Queen Elizabeth Way and a new express route to Malton following generally the bed of the Mimico Creek.

The Board also recommends that the grades be separated at all existing Railway level crossings, that jogs forming traffic bottlenecks and hazards be corrected and that a systematic programme of pavement widening be carried out as set out in the report. All these last mentioned items are of a type that can readily be incorporated into an immediate post-war work programme.

The Board strongly resists any suggestion that the highway programme recommended is designed to assist decentralisation. The history of this City is that decentralisation is brought about by the lack of residential amenities in the older residential areas and central traffic congestion and that it will continue so long as the areas in question fail to be a proper place in which to live and raise a family. This condition can only be corrected by a comprehensive programme of reconstruction that will supply the amenities now lacking, which people seek but seek in vain in the suburbs, coupled with an adequate system of transportation that will permit the maximum freedom and convenience of movement between residence, work and recreational districts throughout the whole City. Such a system the Board has sought to design. It would be manifestly wrong to fail to provide at the same time adequate Provincial Highway connections.

## THE DOWNTOWN AREA

### *Conclusions*

1. That the main streets are mean in appearance and untidy.
2. That the whole area is aesthetically unattractive.
3. That in view of present and estimated future traffic conditions a progressive curtailment of the privilege of parking at the curb will be necessary.
4. That there are few if any suitable sites for the location and proper display of an important building or for the proper grouping of public and semi-public institutions.

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5. That there are no open spaces other than untidy parking lots.
6. That traffic congestion is accentuated by buildings of the skyscraper type.

THE BOARD RECOMMENDS AS PART OF THE MASTER PLAN

(a) That all privately owned land in the area bounded by University Avenue, Dundas Street, Bay Street, and Queen Street be acquired for the purpose of forming a large civic square in which would be located Osgoode Hall, The Registry Office and a New City Hall or other Civic Administrative buildings, etc. The provision of such a square bordering on a redesigned University Avenue and a widened and monumental Queen Street would give to the heart of the City a character, befitting the capital of the Province, such as it has never before possessed.

(b) That the area bounded by University Avenue, Gerrard Street, Bay Street and Dundas Street be set aside for the expansion of the General Hospital and the establishment of other hospitals and like institutions.

(c) That all poles and overhanging signs be removed from the public highways.

(d) That in view of the fact that a place to park is essential to the use of an automobile, municipal parking lots should be established as a public utility and that such vacant lots now operated privately as are improperly located from a traffic standpoint be dedicated as public parks.

In addition to the foregoing, the Board feels that in the area to the west of the University of Toronto, lies the obvious site for its inevitable expansion and that therefore it is important that no development be permitted which will interfere with that expansion in an orderly and proper manner.

Similarly, provision should be made now for the proper siting and grouping as part of the Master Plan of such important public and semi-public institutions as a national music centre, a new Massey Hall or civic auditorium and many others whose location should not be left to chance or dictated by sites that happen to be available when the time for construction arrives.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### **Conclusions**

1. That outside of the City limits no planned attempt has been made to set aside now, when land is cheap, areas that will undoubtedly be needed to supply the recreational demands of future population.
2. That very little if any provision has been made to supply recreational demands of existing suburban population.
3. That the City itself is very deficient in recreational areas in accordance with modern standards.
4. That the Metropolitan Area possesses a priceless heritage in the ravines of Don and the Humber and their tributaries which skirt much of the outer boundary of the built-up area.

The Board unhesitatingly recommends the preservation, free from encroachment and vandalism, of the valleys of the Don and the Humber and their tributaries and their incorporation in a "Green Belt" encircling the present built-up area that will not only act as a buffer between present and future development but will also provide accommodation for every age and group in active sports or passive relaxation in unspoiled natural scenery.

With respect to parks and playgrounds in the City the Board is of the opinion that accepted standards which indicate a shortage of over 600 acres must be co-related to local conditions based on the requirements of each park district. The boundaries of the latter must be physical such as traffic thoroughfares, railways, ravines, etc. rather than political. They cannot therefore be determined until the main features of the Master Plan have been approved.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

### **General Conclusions**

1. That for the protection of the integrity of the Master Plan all changes in the use of land in the Metropolitan Area must be subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority.
2. That an obligation rests upon a subdivider to provide recreational facilities in proportion to the area subdivided.
3. That permanent improvements should be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis with funds not derived entirely from real estate.

4. That Civic appearance is important.
5. That exploitation of the details of the Master Plan must be prevented.

The Board has recommended that legislation covering these and other matters be sought at the forthcoming session of the legislature.

The Master Plan as outlined above is a challenge to the intelligence and resourcefulness of Torontonians. It is, in fact, a people's plan aimed at meeting the crisis created by the necessity of building a modern city on the framework of the old pre-machine age town. It proposes a programme of vast undertakings, but undertakings which in their purpose and magnitude are in scale with our own time and the future. Although the Board, at this stage, is not able to estimate the cost in dollars, it is satisfied that provided the Plan is approved and thus becomes the official plan, and wise counsel prevails in guiding its progress, less money will be spent and less taxes will be paid over the thirty-year period contemplated, than if each of the thirteen municipalities within the metropolitan area continues to go its separate way.

Toronto has planned before, but as the enthusiasm that led to the plans died away, the plans themselves have been pigeonholed as unpractical dreams, and never have its people displayed the tenacity of purpose to look upon planning for what it undoubtedly is the most valuable tool in civic development. Now, after a lapse of years, another start is made, but with infinitely greater difficulty due to the accumulated neglect of the intervening years.

If ever the decay which is eating at the heart of the City is to be stopped; if the City is not to be strangled by its own traffic; if children are to have safe and proper places in which to play, and if citizens are to live in convenient and congenial surroundings, planning must be made a continuing function of civic government, under a partnership of all the municipalities in the Metropolitan Area. Co-operation is of the most vital importance and urgency, for the future holds the choice of order or chaos. Only as Torontonians face the challenge and rise to their responsibilities will they make the vision of the Plan a reality—a City of beauty and cleanliness, of modern housing and modern recreational facilities, and of opportunity for all its people.